/214 cont./

426 however, so that in the case of a deceased poor debtor, the creditor has usually lost his money. Prescription does not occur.
685 A debt forgotten by the debtor may be collected by the creditor
695 years later, if there are witnesses. The situation is similar for
426 the theft of field crops: If there is no witness, no one can be found guilty. If, however, the witness is known as honorable and not deceitful, the accused is judged guilty, even without a con-
692 fession. There is no statement of confirmation corresponding to
695 the oath; similarly, no one condemned for wrongdoing has the
623 right to go to Inzá to the judge. For all misdeeds punished by the
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[782] cabildo, the capitan and gobernador are the first and last authority;
they do not act arbitrarily, however, but rely largely on custom
[686] and the opinion of the village. This is especially true if someone refuses several times in succession to take part in public works, but it also comes out -- unfavorably -- if a poor man tries to
623 become wealthy on his own. For example, disputes not infrequently
692 break out among the Paez on account of damage to cultivated
685 fields when the domestic animals of one person have broken into
578 the fields of a neighbor. Now the fences around each field must always be in good condition and put up in accordance with the term of use of the field. A fence for a maize field, which requires barely a year to mature, may be more lightly built than a fence around a sugar-cane field, which requires three years to mature. Then when strange animals break into fields with good fencing, the owner may kill them or at least wound them, for example, by
[231] cutting off a cow's tail. The owners of pigs fasten a triangular-shaped frame around the necks of their pigs to prevent them from breaking into fenced fields. If the fence is in poor condition, however, and has not been newly erected especially for the planted field, the owner of the animals breaking into the field is not to blame and the owner of the field may not kill them. Of course, the soundness of a fence is to a great extent a matter of opinion, and it happens not infrequently that the disputants go after each
696 other with machetes and wound each other considerably. The
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417 /215/ guilty party is then, after an inspection of the fence, punished
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